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Letter dated 27 June 2018 from the Secretary-General addressed to the President of the Security Council

I have the honour to transmit herewith the fifty-seventh monthly report by the Director General of the Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW), submitted pursuant to paragraph 12 of Security Council resolution 2118 (2013) (see annex). The report covers the period from 24 May to 22 June 2018.

The destruction of the remaining two chemical weapons production facilities, of the 27 declared in total, is now under way. I take note of the statement by the Director General that one of the two remaining facilities has been destroyed, although its destruction has yet to be verified by the OPCW Technical Secretariat. I welcome the completion of the required arrangements for the destruction of the remaining facility.

I note, with continuing regret, that the outstanding issues related to the declaration and further submissions by the Syrian Arab Republic remain unresolved, and that the Syrian Arab Republic has not yet responded in that regard to the letter dated 10 April 2018 from the Director General. I further note that OPCW has begun planning for inspections at the sites identified by the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism in its third and fourth reports. I strongly encourage the Syrian Arab Republic to extend its full cooperation to OPCW.

Once again, I find myself expressing abhorrence over the use of chemical weapons. On 13 June 2018, another report of the OPCW fact-finding mission in the Syrian Arab Republic was issued and subsequently transmitted to the Security Council (S/2018/620, enclosure). In that report, the fact-finding mission stated that the nerve agent sarin was very likely used as a chemical weapon in Ltamenah on 24 March 2017 and that chlorine was very likely used as a chemical weapon at Ltamenah Hospital and the surrounding area on 25 March 2017.

I further note that the investigation of the fact-finding mission into allegations of the use of chemical weapons in Duma on 7 April 2018 is continuing and that the fact-finding mission continues to study all available information relating to other allegations of the use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Once again, I must reiterate that the use of chemical weapons, by any party to the conflict, is without justification and is wholly unacceptable, and that those responsible for these acts must be held to account.

(*Signed*) António **Guterres**

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Annex

[Original: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish]

I have the honour to transmit to you my report entitled "Progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme", prepared in accordance with the relevant provisions of Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons Executive Council decision EC-M-33/DEC.1 and Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), both dated 27 September 2013, for transmission to the Security Council (see enclosure). My report covers the period from 24 May to 22 June 2018 and also covers the reporting requirements of Executive Council decision EC-M-34/DEC.1, dated 15 November 2013.

(*Signed*) Ahmet **Üzümcü**

Enclosure

[Original: Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish]

Note by the Director-General

Progress in the elimination of the Syrian chemical weapons programme

Background

1. In accordance with subparagraph 2(f) of the decision by the Executive Council (hereinafter "the Council") at its Thirty-Third Meeting (EC-M-33/DEC.1, dated 27 September 2013), the Technical Secretariat (hereinafter "the Secretariat") is to report to the Council on a monthly basis regarding the implementation of that decision. In accordance with paragraph 12 of United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013), the report by the Secretariat is also to be submitted to the Security Council through the Secretary-General.

2. The Council, at its Thirty-Fourth Meeting, adopted a decision entitled "Detailed Requirements for the Destruction of Syrian Chemical Weapons and Syrian Chemical Weapons Production Facilities" (EC-M-34/DEC.1, dated 15 November 2013). In paragraph 22 of that decision, the Council decided that the Secretariat should report on its implementation "in conjunction with its reporting required by subparagraph 2(f) of Council decision EC-M-33/DEC.1".

3. The Council, at its Forty-Eighth Meeting, adopted a decision entitled "Reports of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria" (EC-M-48/DEC.1, dated 4 February 2015) noting the Director-General's intent to include reports of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission (FFM) in Syria, along with information on the Council's discussion thereof, as part of the monthly reporting pursuant to United Nations Security Council resolution 2118 (2013). Similarly, the Council, at its Eighty-First Session, adopted a decision entitled "Report by the Director-General Regarding the Declaration and Related Submissions by the Syrian Arab Republic" (EC-81/DEC.4, dated 23 March 2016), noting the Director-General's intent to provide information on the implementation of that decision.

4. The Council, at its Eighty-Third Session, adopted a decision entitled "OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism Reports on Chemical Weapons Use in the Syrian Arab Republic" (EC-83/DEC.5, dated 11 November 2016). In subparagraph 12(a) of that decision, the Council decided that the Director-General shall "regularly inform the Council on the implementation of this decision and incorporate information regarding the implementation of this decision into his monthly reporting to the United Nations Security Council, through the United Nations Secretary-General, regarding EC-M-33/DEC.1".

5. This, the fifty-seventh monthly report, is therefore submitted in accordance with the aforementioned Council decisions and includes information relevant to the period from 24 May 2018 to 22 June 2018.

Progress achieved by the Syrian Arab Republic in meeting the requirements of Executive Council decisions EC-M-33/DEC.1 and EC-M-34/DEC.1

6. Progress by the Syrian Arab Republic is as follows:

(a) The Secretariat has verified the destruction of 25 of the 27 chemical weapons production facilities (CWPFs) declared by the Syrian Arab Republic. Just prior to the cut-off date of this report, one of the two remaining CWPFs was

destroyed, and its destruction is yet to be verified by the Secretariat. The Secretariat, together with the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), has completed the required arrangements to assist the Syrian Arab Republic in the destruction of the remaining CWPF. Preparatory work for this destruction is under way, but is dependent on the prevailing security conditions.

(b) On 20 June 2018, the Syrian Arab Republic submitted to the Council its fifty-fifth monthly report (EC-88/P/NAT.4, dated 20 June 2018) regarding activities on its territory related to the destruction of its CWPFs, as required by paragraph 19 of EC-M-34/DEC.1.

Progress in the elimination of Syrian chemical weapons by States Parties hosting destruction activities

7. As stated in previous reports, all of the chemicals declared by the Syrian Arab Republic that were removed from its territory in 2014 have now been destroyed.

Activities carried out by the Secretariat with respect to Executive Council decisions EC-81/DEC.4 and EC-83/DEC.5

8. During the reporting period, the Declaration Assessment Team (DAT) continued its efforts to clarify all outstanding issues regarding the initial declaration of the Syrian Arab Republic in accordance with paragraph 3 of Council decision EC-81/DEC.4 and paragraph 6 of Council decision EC-83/DEC.5.

9. As noted by the Director-General in his report "Status of Implementation of Executive Council Decision EC-83/DEC.5 (dated 11 November 2016)" (EC-88/DG.13, dated 14 June 2018), the Secretariat has begun planning the inspections at the sites identified by the OPCW-United Nations Joint Investigative Mechanism in its third and fourth reports, in accordance with paragraph 10 of Council decision EC-83/DEC.5. The Secretariat also continues to monitor the security situation through the United Nations Department of Safety and Security to identify permissive security conditions for those inspections.

10. With regard to paragraph 11 of Council decision EC-83/DEC.5, the Director-General in the aforementioned report provided information on the status of the Secretariat's two rounds of inspections that were conducted at each of the Barzah and Jamrayah facilities of the Scientific Studies and Research Centre in 2017 and, also as previously reported, noted that the results of the analysis of samples taken during those inspections did not indicate the presence of scheduled chemicals, and that the inspection teams did not observe any activities inconsistent with obligations under the Convention. The Director-General also noted that, as each of these facilities are to be inspected twice per year in accordance with paragraph 11 of EC-83/DEC.5, two rounds of inspections are due in 2018.

11. With regard to paragraph 6 and subparagraph 12(b) of the Council decision, the Director-General reported to the Council at its Eighty-Seventh Session concerning the results of the DAT's analysis of the documents submitted by the Syrian Arab Republic on 10 November 2017 (EC-87/DG.16, dated 23 February 2018). As reported previously, in a letter to Deputy Foreign Minister of the Syrian Arab Republic, Dr. Faisal Mekdad, dated 10 April 2018, the Director-General reiterated that unanswered questions remained and that these require a response. The Director-General also repeated his request to the Syrian authorities to provide all necessary information that would assist in clarifying the remaining issues associated with the declarations and further submissions of the Syrian Arab Republic. As at the cut-off date of this report, the Director-General had not received a response from the Syrian Arab Republic to the letter of 10 April 2018.

Other activities carried out by the Secretariat with respect to the Syrian Arab Republic

12. UNOPS continues to provide support to the OPCW mission in the Syrian Arab Republic in accordance with the Tripartite Agreement.

13. As at the cut-off date of this report, one OPCW staff member was deployed as part of the OPCW mission in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Supplementary resources

14. As previously reported, the Trust Fund for Syria Missions was established in November 2015 to support the OPCW FFM and other remaining activities, such as those of the DAT. As at the cut-off date of this report, total contributions to this fund stood at EUR 17.1 million. Contribution agreements had been concluded with Canada, Chile, Finland, France, Germany, Monaco, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America, and the European Union.

Activities carried out with respect to the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria

15. The FFM, during its deployment to gather facts related to the alleged use of chemicals as a weapon in Khan Shaykhun on 4 April 2017, received samples and additional information related to a number of allegations that toxic chemicals were used as weapons in Ltamenah, in the Hama Governorate. The FFM, as detailed in the Secretariat's Note entitled "Report of the OPCW Fact-Finding Mission in Syria Regarding Alleged Incidents in Ltamenah, the Syrian Arab Republic, 24 and 25 March 2017" (S/1636/2018*, dated 13 June 2018), concluded that sarin was very likely used as a chemical weapon in the south of Ltamenah on 24 March 2017. The report also notes that the FFM determined that chlorine was released from cylinders through mechanical impact, and concluded that chlorine was very likely used as a chemical weapon at Ltamenah hospital and the surrounding area on 25 March 2017.

16. With regard to the allegations of the use of chemical weapons in Douma on 7 April 2018, the FFM continues to analyse all available information, including information gathered during the course of its deployments to the Syrian Arab Republic.

17. Guided by Council decisions EC-M-48/DEC.1 and EC-M-50/DEC.1 (dated 23 November 2015), as well as by United Nations Security Council resolution 2209 (2015), the FFM continues to study all available information relating to the allegations of use of chemical weapons in the Syrian Arab Republic.

Conclusion

18. The main focus of the future activities of the OPCW mission in the Syrian Arab Republic will be on the activities of the FFM; the implementation of Council decisions EC-83/DEC.5 and EC-81/DEC.4, including declaration-related issues; the verification of the destruction of the two stationary above-ground facilities; and annual inspections of the underground structures already verified as destroyed.